

Appendix O

Model Leak Test Program and Sample Analysis

Training

Before allowing an individual to perform leak testing, the RSO will ensure that he or she has sufficient classroom and on-the-job training to show competency in performing leak tests independently.

Classroom training may be in the form of lecture, videotape, or self-study and will cover the following subject areas:

- Principles and practices of radiation protection
- Radioactivity measurements, monitoring techniques, and the use of instruments
- Mathematics and calculations basic to the use and measurement of radioactivity
- Biological effects of radiation.

Appropriate on-the-job-training consists of:

- Observing authorized personnel collecting and analyzing leak test samples
- Collecting and analyzing leak test samples under the supervision and in the physical presence of an individual authorized to perform leak tests.

Facilities and Equipment

- To ensure achieving the required sensitivity of measurements, leak tests will be analyzed in a low-background area.
- Individuals conducting leak tests will use a calibrated and operable survey instrument to check leak test samples for gross contamination before they are analyzed.
- A NaI(Tl) well counter system with a single or multichannel analyzer will be used to count samples from gauges containing gamma-emitters (e.g., Cs-137, Co-60).
- A liquid scintillation or gas-flow proportional counting system will be used to count samples from gauges containing beta-emitters (e.g., Sr-90) or alpha emitters (e.g., Am-241).

Frequency for Conducting Leak Tests of Sealed Sources

- Leak tests will be conducted at the frequency specified in the respective SSD Registration Certificate.

Procedure for Performing Leak Testing and Analysis

- For each source to be tested, list identifying information such as gauge serial number, radionuclide, activity.
- If available, use a survey meter to monitor exposure.
- Prepare a separate wipe sample (e.g., cotton swab or filter paper) for each source.
- Number each wipe to correlate with identifying information for each source.

- Wipe the most accessible area where contamination would accumulate if the sealed source were leaking.
- Select an instrument that is sensitive enough to detect 185 Bq (0.005 microcurie) of the radionuclide contained in the gauge.
- Using the selected instrument count and record background count rate.
- Check the instrument's counting efficiency using standard source of the same radionuclide as the source being tested or one with similar energy characteristics. Accuracy of standards should be within $\pm 5\%$ of the stated value and traceable to a primary radiation standard such as those maintained by the National Institutes of Standards and Technology (NIST).
- Calculate efficiency.

For example:

$$\frac{[(\text{cpm from std}) - (\text{cpm from bkg})]}{\text{activity of std in Bq}} = \text{efficiency in cpm/Bq}$$

Where:

cpm = counts per minute

std = standard

bkg = background

Bq = Becquerel

- Count each wipe sample; determine net count rate.
- For each sample, calculate and record estimated activity in Bq (or microcuries).

For example:

$$\frac{[(\text{cpm from wipe sample}) - (\text{cpm from bkg})]}{\text{efficiency in cpm/Bq}} = \text{Bq on wipe sample}$$

- Sign and date the list of sources, data and calculations. Retain records for 3 years.
- If the wipe test activity is 185 Bq (0.005 microcurie) or greater, notify the RSO, so that the source can be withdrawn from use and disposed of properly. Also notify the Agency